

FAIR HOUSING BOARD MEETING
Minutes of the Meeting

December 9, 2015

The Fair Housing Board meeting was called to order at 10:00 AM on December 9, 2015, in the Conference Room at City Hall.

Present for the meeting were Board Members Vincent Loparo, Bruce Konya, Denny Johnson, Phyllis Dunlap, from CT Consultants and Secretary Tim Pope.

The Board approved the Minutes of the June 10, 2015 meeting and the minutes of the September 9, 2015 meeting, with Mr. Johnson abstaining on the minutes of the September meeting because of his absence from that meeting.

Mr. Pope commented that there have been no complaints filed.

Mr. Pope reported on his attendance at the Housing Conference in November, in particular there was a session on fair housing that he attended. One of the topics covered was Community Outreach. Mr. Pope suggested that perhaps the Fair Housing Board should have a booth at the Corn Festival to distribute flyers and answer questions regarding fair housing. It was noted that members of the board were already committed to other booths at the festival and that perhaps we could piggyback on another booth, such as Community Care. It was also suggested that the board could hand out free promotional items such as refrigerator magnets and other such novelties. Mrs. Dunlap said that the items could be purchased with grant money.

Mr. Pope shared a number of posters and flyers that could be posted throughout the City in various locations. It was asked where we currently post Fair Housing information. Besides the city's website, posters and flyers are in the Library, City Hall and selected realty offices. Mr. Pope said he would make an effort to get the materials posted at local banks. Mr. Pope then distributed Fair Housing Handbooks by the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD) to the board members.

Mr. Pope told the board members that the three top discriminatory actions are based on: 1) People with Disabilities, 2) Familial Status, such as single mothers with children, and 3) Race. Discussion ensued regarding different scenarios regarding service animals, dogs in particular. Mr. Johnson asked what the procedure was when such a complaint is lodged with the Fair Housing Board and when is the landlord's name made public if such a complaint is made. Mrs. Dunlap explained that the landlord's name is not a matter of public record unless the complaint goes to the Civil Rights Commission.

Mrs. Dunlap shared a press release from the Department of Justice (DOJ) regarding the results of fair housing tests conducted by the DOJ in which Ridge Plaza Apartments in North Ridgeville was found to have discriminated against African –Americans. The Landlord and his management company entered into a consent decree to pay \$30,000 to resolve claims, establish non-discriminatory rental policies, obtain fair housing training, and submit to reporting and monitoring requirements for a three year term

Mr. Johnson asked why the city, particularly this board, was not notified of the results of the audit, since we are the local board and this happened in our city. A motion was then made by Mr. Johnson, seconded by Dr. Konya and approved unanimously to have the secretary draft a letter to the Attorney General, DOJ and HUD to notify the board when such violations take place in our city.

Mrs. Dunlap stated that an audit in Conneaut compares to ours. She was notified of the test results by the Housing Research and Advisory Center. The results of testing can be found in a 5 county report at thehousingcenter.org.

Mrs. Dunlap updated the board on the status of the PY2013 and PY2015 Housing Repair and Rehabilitation grants:

Program Year (PY)2013 – All projects have been completed.

Home Repair was targeted to repair 14 homes. The city was able to repair 16 homes.

Home Rehabilitation was targeted to rehab 6 homes. 7 homes were fully rehabbed.

Program Year (PY)2015 – The City received 15 applications for the 1 year grant cycle.

Home Repair is targeted to repair 6 homes. 10 applications were received.

Home Rehabilitation is targeted to rehab 4 homes. 5 applications were received.

The projects are currently being reviewed and ranked.

Mrs. Dunlap explained the partnering program which the city is expected to utilize for PY 2016. Currently, all cities in Lorain County are on that cycle. It is recommended that the city try to partner with at least one of the smaller cities in the county like Sheffield or Oberlin. It is unclear if Vermilion will be part of Lorain or Erie County for the next grant cycle. If they are part of Lorain County, they are a possible partner. Generally the larger municipality is the grantee and the smaller partner is considered a target area. The disadvantage to partnering is that grant money could be moved to one of the other partner communities. Conversely, if a partnering community cannot come up with enough projects the other communities could receive additional grant money.

The schedule was set for 2016 Fair Housing Board meetings:

March 16, 2016

June 8, 2016

September 7, 2016

December 7, 2016

All meetings are to take place in the Mayor's Conference Room at 10:00AM

New Business – Mrs. Dunlap pointed out that the city must update its Analysis of Impediments to Fair Housing in 2016. The last analysis was performed in 2011 and it is required once every five years. Lorain County is currently performing their analysis, which includes the City of North Ridgeville. Mrs. Dunlap will check to see if we could piggyback on the county's filing. Otherwise, a full report will have to be commissioned. In 2011 the city spent \$5,000 to have a report prepared by Donald B. Eager & Associates. Mrs. Dunlap will also check to see if we can just have the 2011 reported updated, rather than having a complete re-analysis. The study can be paid for from grant money.

The next meeting was set for March 16, 2016 at 10AM in the Conference room.

The meeting adjourned at 10:53AM.

Respectfully Submitted,
Timothy Pope
Executive Secretary